

Message Text

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20

ACTION EUR-12

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R 080831Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3638

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BUDAPEST 2130

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, EAGR, HU

SUBJ: FLOODING IN HUNGARY

REF: VIENNA 5759 (NOTEL)

1. HEAVY RAINS AND FLOODING PLAGUING AUSTRIA HAVE SPILLED OVER HUNGARY. THE DANUBE IS EXPECTED TO PEAK ON JULY 8 AT 805 CENTIMETERS AND FLOOD ALERTS OF VARYING DEGREES ARE IN FORCE ALONG THE DANUBE, THE TISZA AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES. SOME 82,000 HECTARES ARE ALREADY FLOODED AS WORKERS AND PUMPS ATTEMPT TO TURN THE TIDE.

2. THESE CONDITIONS HAVE SERIOUSLY AND ADVERSELY AFFECTED HUNGARIAN HARVESTING OPERATIONS WHICH BEGAN IN LATE JUNE. REPORTS FROM HUNGARIAN SOURCES INDICATE ONLY 15 - 20 PERCENT OF THE AUTUMN BARLEY CROP HARVESTED PLUS PROBLEMS OF HIGH MOISTURE CONTENT. THE HEAVY RAINS AND FLOODING HAVE

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SERIOUSLY DAMPENED PROSPECTS FOR A GOOD WHEAT HARVEST.

EMBASSY OBSERVERS OF THE LOCAL RURAL SCENE HAVE NOTED EXTENSIVE FIELDS OF TOPPLED WHEAT. SITUATION IS FURTHER EXACERBATED BY THE POOR DISTRIBUTION OF COMBINES AND A CRONIC SHORTAGE OF SPARE PARTS FOR THE EAST GERMAN E-512 HARVESTER. EMBASSY OFFICER RETURNING TO BUDAPEST ON JULY 6 SAW ONLY TWO COMBINES IN USE ALONG 100 MILE STRETCH BETWEEN BIHARKERESZTES AND SZOLNOK.

3. EMBASSY COMMENT: FLOOD SITUATION IN CENTRAL EUROPE CLEARLY BODES ILL FOR HUNGARIAN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR AND SEEMS CERTAIN MAKE HUNGARIAN FINANCIAL STRAINS EVEN MORE ACUTE.
MCAULIFFE

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